

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Claims 11, 12, and 15-20 stand rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Akamine et al. (US 2004/0121746) in view of Anim-Appiah et al. (US 2004/0100898). Claims 13 and 14 stand rejected, under 35 USC §103(a), as being unpatentable over Akamine et al. (US 2004/0121746) in view of Anim-Appiah et al. (US 2004/0100898) and Itoh (US 2003/0031135). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections based on the points set forth below.

All pending rejections rely on Akamine et al. (US 2004/0121746) which has a 35 USC 102(e) date of December 5, 2003. It is noted that the present application claims priority based on Japanese priority application JP2003-402232 dated December 1, 2003, which antedates the 35 USC 102(e) date of Akamine et al.

To perfect their claim for priority, the Applicants enclose a verified English translation of their Japanese priority application JP2003-402232. The Applicants submit that this priority application supports the subject matter of claims 11-20. Therefore, it is submitted that Akamine is overcome as a prior art reference against present claims 11-20, and withdrawal of the pending rejections and allowance of claims 11-20 is considered to be warranted.

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited.

If any issues remain which may best be resolved through a telephone communication, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the local Washington, D.C. telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/James Edward Ledbetter/

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JEL/DWW/att

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